

Uphold Communal Amity

SUC Central Committee's Appeal to People of Orissa and West Bengal

The Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India had issued the following statement to the Press on 15th February strongly condemning the derogatory remarks made in a Calcutta daily against Oriya people.

"The Central Committee of the SUCI vehemently condemns the most insulting and derogatory comments against the Oriya people made by the Hindustan Standard, Calcutta, in its editorial column. The Central Committee also condemns the callousness and negligence of duty on the part of both the Governments of West Bengal and Orissa either in taking effective steps against the heinous attempts of the reactionaries to stir up provincialism or in taking necessary precautionary measures even when the apprehension of communal disturbances was quite evident, and urges upon the Governments of both the States to take firm measures to put down communalism-provincialism with strong hand.

"The Central Committee observes with great satisfaction that already a saner section from both the communities has come forward against provincialism-communalism. Very recently, Com. Chitta Behera, the former General Secretary of the

Ravenshaw College Students' Union and a leader of the DSO, has been severely assaulted when he, after mobilising the democratic-minded students, went to resist a communal procession.

"The Central Committee calls upon the progressive and democratic-minded people of both the States to boldly come forward against all sorts of nefarious attempts of the reactionaries to stir up provincialism and fanaticism, of which already a good number of members of minority community of both the States have fallen victims.

"The Central Committee hopes that the people of both the States, particularly the students and the youths, following the noble example of Com. Chitta Behera, would come out boldly and in an organised way to stand against communalism-provincialism. The Central Committee also appeals to all left and democratic parties and forces to stand united for maintaining amity and to safeguard the security of the minority communities of both the States."

SUC Protests Against Rise in Railway Fares and Freight Charges

Com. Nihar Mukherjee, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee, SUCI, in the course of a statement said that, "the rise in Third Class fare and the enhanced rate of freight charges will inevitably hit the poorer section of our people."

Com. Mukherjee further said that "contrary to the hope expressed by the Railway Minister, this will invariably add fuel to the ever-increasing inflationary trend and also adversely affect the cost of living of our people vitally. Even the original rise in third class fare will put unbearable burden on our common people, who are already over-taxed."

Com. Mukherjee observed very critically that though the Railway Ministry showed scant respect for the passengers' amenities, accommodation, timely service etc. etc. it was on and often found very jubilant to raise fares affecting common people. Com. Mukherjee in conclusion demanded of the Central Govt. to abandon the proposal to raise Third Class fare.

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Chhatra Parishad Gangsterism Reaches New High in W. Bengal

(By Our Staff Reporter)

Fascist gangsterism by Chhatra Parishad—the students wing of the ruling Congress has reached its highest peak recently during the Student Union elections in West Bengal colleges. Attacks and assaults on students belonging to DSO and other left student organisations, intimidation and mass terrorisation of general students, insulting and even manhandling of principals and professors—all these have become everyday affair in colleges here.

At least in three Calcutta colleges all DSO members' nomination papers have been snatched away or destroyed by Chhatra Parishad gangsters who are now sure to win "elections" in these colleges.

On February 5, a gang of Chhatra Parishad members of New Alipore College, armed with revolvers and other lethal weapons, arrived in a jeep at the College ground where the annual sports was then going on. The armed gangsters attacked and assaulted Sushil Chatterjee, Madan Sau, Ajoy Chatterjee and Dilip Guha Roy—all DSO nominees in the Student Union election, and snatched their nomination papers.

The next day, the last day for filing nominations, when DSO members submitted their nominations to the Principal, the CP members entered his room and snatched the papers from the Principal and assaulted DSO members inside his chamber. Ajoy Chatterjee, Dilip Guha Roy, Atanu Roy, Nirmal Sarkar, Shyama Prasad Dalapati and Madan Sau were seriously injured. Ajoy and Dilip had to be rushed to S S K M

hospital in precarious conditions. Ajoy's bleeding could not be stopped before six hours.

The same pattern was followed in Asutosh College. On February 5, when DSO members, braving all the attacks, assaults and intimidations went to file their nominations, they were attacked by Parishad goondas. Arabindo Pal and Chandidas Bhattacharya, both DSO organisers, were seriously injured. The goondas snatched the nomination papers from them and other DSO members and left the place.

In Khidderpur College the Parishad gangsters followed the same set steps. When the DSO members submitted their nominations even on the face of murder-threats, they turned to the Principal and tried to force him to reject the nominations of DSO members. When the Principal refused to oblige them, they accused him of being a "DSO agent" and he was beaten up along with some other professors who protested against this fascist methods of Chhatra Parishad. The nomination papers of DSO

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C P I In Quandary Over Alliance with Congress

Different reports published in the Press would appear to the Left and democratic people to indicate that recently the contradiction between the CPI and the Congress might have greatly intensified,

In this connection, we would like to remind our readers that some days back, after considering in its detail the anti-people role of the PDA, the so-called progressive, democratic alliance of the ruling Congress and the CPI in West Bengal, and the boss-like behavior of the former towards the latter, we observed that, "one may be tempted to comment that the Progressive Democratic Alliance is neither progressive, nor democratic, nor can it be called an alliance". The course of events since a couple of months and the recent incidents during the last few days all clearly furnish us with evidences in support of our said observation.

Since the last election in the country, when the so-called PDA came into power in the State through a rigged election, the CPI, solely guided by the object of gaining privileges by maintaining its alliance with the party in power has been trying its utmost to hold brief for the Congress in the most naked and shameless manner. When the Congress, the leader of the so-called progressive democratic alliance, has attempted to crush all progressive and democratic forces in the country, when the Congress labelled as the 'progressive

Subir Basu Roy

force' by the CPI, had taken recourse to fascistic measures of forcibly capturing, destroying, physically annihilating the organisations of other Left parties and their cadres, the leaders of the CPI have stated without any prick of conscience that all these charges against the 'progressive' Congress are false and are made only to tarnish the image of the PDA. Even Mr. Dange's recent speech in Calcutta is an ugly attempt to whitewash the criminal activities of the ruling Congress and boost up its 'progressive' image before the people. We feel that the CPI has perhaps forgotten the well-known Bengali proverb 'when the cowdung

cake burns, the cowdung smiles' (Ghunte pore, gobar hase'). For once you let loose the Frankenstein, then you yourself would not be spared from being attacked by it. Within a couple of days, the ruling Congress hoodlums and the anti-social elements under the leadership of the organisers of the Congress began to launch attack on the cadres of the CPI, and mass organisations controlled by it and even in some cases forcibly captured the said organisations. Obviously the condition of the leaders of the CPI became wretched as they had to raise their voice of protest against these activities of the Congress, however feeble the voice might appear to the Left and democratic people of the country.

Moreover, the attitude of the CPI towards the Congress at times appears to be critical for other reason too.

The CPI desires to play an active role in the so-called alliance with a view to enjoying an appreciable share of the administrative powers and privileges. The leaders of the CPI try to conceal their real motive and they often rationalise their desire by publicly contending that for strengthening the unity of the PDA, mutual discussions and consultations must be held between the two

parties of the alliance. But the big partner of the so-called alliance, the Congress does not pay any heed to the proposals put forward by the CPI and most often manifests a boss-like attitude to the junior partner. In fact, one cannot but feel sorry for the CPI for the humiliation it is suffering at the hands of its big brother, the ruling Congress. Meanwhile, as days are passing out, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Congress to maintain the radical cloak that it donned and gradually its real anti-people, pro-monopolist and pro-jotedar character is becoming exposed to the common people. On many occasions even the CPI has to acknowledge the fact that there is an "unholy collusion of the big monopolies, the bankers, the bureaucrats and the leadership of the Government". Under the circumstances, the party has felt that its Left image has been already been tarnished owing to its pro-Congress policy and obviously, it is now faced with the problem of reviving its Left image among the toiling people of the country.

All these things have pushed the CPI to such a position where it is rather forced to criticise some of the attitudes and activities of the ruling Congress. And for obvious reasons this has offended the latter. Recently it has been reported in the Statesman (1.2.73) that 'the Congress Parliamentary Board would soon review its relationship with the CPI particularly the merit of continuing alliance with it. A good number of big bosses of the party have been stated to have questioned the wisdom of retaining the alliance'. At the same time, it has also been reported in the Press that the CPI has told the Congress in the State

that it will pursue an 'independent line in the Assembly, highlight the popular demands and press for the implementation of the programme of the so-called PDA.

But none should conclude from this that the opportunistic tie between the two parties would be broken or the CPI on its own initiative would break its opportunistic unity, based on pragmatic consideration, with the Congress, and it is not unexpected that the last meeting of the so-called PDA in West Bengal has ended in a more or less congenial environment, with both parties mildly criticising one another. It has been stated that regular meetings, discussions would be held between the two parties, and the Congress clearly understands the fact that this assurance is enough to shut the mouth of the leaders of the CPI, who are prepared to anyhow maintain the unity with the Congress even if it means abject surrender to the Congress. The cadres and supporters of the party might get shocked at our assessment of the policy at present pursued by the leaders of the CPI, but no sensible and right thinking man can conclude otherwise. The attitude expressed by the leaders of the CPI in the recent 'Dange-Siddhartha' controversy over a certain remark made by the former about the latter has clearly revealed the feelings of utter servility from which the said leaders suffer in regard to their attitude towards the Congress.

In the past we have observed that in the beginning of the PDA rule the CPI generally declined to make comment against Mr Siddhartha Sankar Ray, the Chief Minister of the State. This state of affairs continued for some time. Now, as days pass on, gradually the anti-people attitude of the State Congress leaders naturally being expressed, the tie of the Congress with the monopoly houses being more and more revealed to the people, the CPI, in its desperate bid to

Congress Betrayal of People Lands Alliance Partner CPI In 'Political Desert'

restore its Left image before the people, at times had to mention of the existing tie of the Chief Minister of the State with the different monopolists and in this background came the recent remark by Mr Dange about Mr Siddharta Sankar Ray that he was an 'unalloyed bourgeois leader'. Naturally the said comment enraged the Congress leaders who charged the CPI leaders demanding explanations for the said comment.

A point should be mentioned in this connection. The CPI hitherto has characterised the West Bengal Chief Minister Mr. Siddharta Sankar Ray, in many editorial comments and writings published in its organs as reactionary, not entirely toeing the line of Sm. Indira Gandhi, representing the 'progressive' section of the Congress. It is well known that Mr. Ray advocated for relaxation of prevalent restrictive practices imposed on the monopoly houses so as to give a freer scope to the monopolists to expand their economic activities on the plea of creating more job opportunities for the unemployed in the State. This advocacy of the West Bengal Chief Minister had earned him many bitter remarks in CPI'S organs. The CPI termed him as reactionary for his professed view against so-called anti-monopoly drive of Sm. Gandhi. But just when Mr. Dange's comment on Mr. Ray created a furore in the Congress circle in the State and the CPI was in a predicament to prove its sincerity about its meek loyalty to the Congress, the same person whom it all through described as reactionary was termed as a 'progressive bourgeois' and the rising storm died down all at once. Such a sheer pragmatism of calling one as progressive while a moment before he was reactionary in its eye and more often than not shifting its stand has become the chief characteristic of the CPI's politics.

The CPI often proclaims that it would form an alliance with the so-called progressive section of the Congress and develop mighty joint mass movements to realise the promises made by the PDA. In fact, thousands of times, if not more the people, have heard the CPI leaders constantly parroting their said pet phrases in the past. But we were astonished to note that when Srimati Indira Gandhi, in a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Board made it clear to the leaders, members and organisers of her party, that she would not like them participate in any movement, particularly in the context of movement demanding bouns to the Railway and other Government employees that might push the Government led by her party in different States and at the Centre in an uneasy position, the CPI did not raise even the mildest voice of protest, but still it constantly goes on proclaiming that it would develop a programme of mighty democratic movement in alliance with the so-called progressive section of the Congress led by Srimati Gandhi.

Another important issue that would also draw the attention of the interested readers is the callously indifferent and uncritical attitude expressed by the CPI towards the Congress High Command in regard to the situation of events that recently developed in Andhra Pradesh. Despite the separatist stand of Andhra Congress leaders—which has clearly violated the unanimously accepted resolution in this regard in the recently held AICC session in Calcutta, and moreover goes against the solemn pledge of Indira Gandhi before the people that she would tackle the separatist elements with stronghand measures even if they belonged to her own party and that she would not allow any separation of

Andhra Pradesh—the Congress High Command without any prick of conscience did not hesitate to hold mutual consultation and discussions with the separatist leaders. Not only did the High Command not take any disciplinary action against them and accept the resignations submitted by its members from the party for the rejection of their demand for a separate state, but also it has given a quick assurance that its mind was still open and its aggrieved members, demanding separation of the state were advised not to take any precipitate step. This attitude expressed by the Congress in the affair of Andhra Pradesh does not at all appear mysterious to the common people who are quite accustomed by now about the anti-people, pro-monopolist reactionary policy of the Congress engaged in smothering all forms of democratic norms in the country. But what astonishes us is the fact that the CPI, who always searches 'progressiveness' in the Congress and pledges to build up mighty democratic mass movement along with the 'progressive' section of the Congress, has not uttered a single word in protest against the undemocratic anti-people opportunistic policy pursued by the Congress in regard to the affair of the Andhra Pradesh.

So, those who think that the CPI would be pushed to a point of no return in regard to its unity with the Congress, would soon realise their mistake. The leaders of the CPI consider themselves to be very wise and they are pursuing the dangerous policy of sailing in two boats at a time. While on the one hand the party leaders cannot risk to lose blessings of Indira Gandhi and thereby are eager to continue the opportunistic tie with the Congress, on the

other hand, feeling that their pro-Congress policy would lead the party to a complete isolation from the Left and democratic people, often try to pose themselves to be critical about the anti-people undemocratic actions of the ruling Congress.

Now, any sensible man can easily realise that the desire once expressed by the CPI to pursue an independent line is nothing but a bargaining tactics aimed at only to create some pressure on the Congress to wrest an assurance of more privileges from the party controlling the administration. Such a close liaison between the CPI and Congress and handling the administration to their mutual benefits would in no way restore the democratic norms in the State, but in fact help perpetuate the present disruption in the Left movement and create still more confusion about the Congress among the people. Even the verbal assurances given by the leaders of the Congress that mutual consultations would take place between the two parties and that none would capture the organisations controlled by the other partner are more than that the leaders of the CPI could have expected to get from the leaders of the Congress.

Perhaps the leaders of the CPI think that they would share the privileges and enjoy the opportunities by maintaining its unholy tie with the party in power and, at the same time, would succeed in keeping its Left image alive among the fighting masses. The attitude of the CPI leaders reminds us of persons who desire to collect fruit both from the top of the tree as well as from the ground. But the leaders of the party should remember that if they think that they would be able to befool the people and their opportunistic behavior would remain unexposed then they would be living in a

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Politics of 'Pragmatism' Leading CPI to Liquidation

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fool's paradise. They should realise that one can befooled some persons, for all time, or all persons for some time, but one can not befooled all persons for all the time.

Lastly, we would like to urge upon the cadres, and supporters of the party to ponder over some relevant questions.

Do they think that the unity between the CPI and the ruling Congress is a real political alliance in the true sense of the term? Would it be unjustified if any right thinking man considers the so-called alliance to be an opportunistic tie between the two parties where the big partner shows boss-like behaviour to the junior partner and the latter searches for sharing privileges and enjoying opportunities by keeping its unity with the party in power? How can they consider the so-called alliance to be progressive and democratic when

the unity itself is working as the spearhead of mounting attacks on working people and all sorts of progressive and democratic struggles of the masses?

How long would they allow their leaders to behave as drum boys of Indira Gandhi and keep their party tied to the apron string of the ruling Congress?

We urge upon the cadres, sympathisers and supporters of the party to seriously ponder over those questions. They should realise that the so-called alliance between the Congress and the CPI is doing the greatest harm to the Left and democratic unity, united democratic struggle and the real cause of the masses. It is high time that they should try utmost to turn back their party from the path of complete liquidation. For, history never absolves anyone of his mistake even if he is ignorant of the mistake unknowingly committed by him.

Assam

DSO Conference at Lakshmipur

Lakshmipur (Assam): Under the auspices of the DSO Lakshmipur Local Committee, a Student Conference was held here on Jan. 23 and 24.

Comrade Kantimoy Dev, Secretary, Assam State Committee of the DSO, in his address dealt elaborately on the problems of education and urged upon the students to build up a broad based student movement to resist the education curtailment policy of the Government.

In the open session, Com. Dewan Jainal Abedin, Secretary, Goalpara District Committee of the SUCI, and Com. Sahabuddin Ahmad, well-known educationist and teacher, called upon the students to actively take part in the greater struggle for social progress while conducting their day-to-day movements against the policy of curtailment of education.

Com. Saad Ullah Mian, Com. Nurul Islam and others also addressed the gathering.

A Students Action Committee has been formed to organise and conduct movements on the basis of local educational and other demands. A decision to send a deputation to wait upon the Chief Minister during the ensuing Budget session of the Assembly was also taken at the conference.

Chhatra Parishad Gangsterism

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candidates were snatched away and destroyed.

The DSO West Bengal Committee Secretary, Com. Chhaya Mukherjee in a statement issued to the Press strongly condemned these fascist attacks by Chhatra Parishad gangsters and urged all students to unitedly resist this fascist menace.

Bihar

Singhbhum District KKMf Conference

The fifth annual conference of the Singhbhum District Kishan & Khet Majdoor Sangh was held here on February 19 and 20 with great enthusiasm under the chairmanship of Comrade Hiren Sarkar, an eminent public leader of Bihar and a member of the SUC Central Committee.

Inaugurating the open session at Bahragorah on February 19, Com. Subodh Banerjee, member of the Central Committee of the SUCI, dealt elaborately on the problems facing the peasantry, urged upon the poor peasants, share-croppers and agricultural labourers to raise their ideological standard by consciously participating in

the democratic movements and strengthen their organisation.

Comrades Durga Das and Jogen Mahato, district peasant leaders and Comrade Banbehari Jena, one of the front-ranking SUC organisers in Orissa also addressed the gathering.

About 700 delegates from all parts of Orissa participated at the delegates' session on February 20.

"Ghum Bhangar Gan" (Song of the dawn)—a jatra presented by the "Charanik" group of Calcutta DYU after the open session of 19th received high appreciation and applause from the audience.

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper PROLETARIAN ERA to be published in the first issue after last day of February.

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I, Sukomal Das Gupta, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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